

## CITY COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: October 5, 2016

TO: Mayor and Council Members

FROM: McKenzie Jones, Sustainability Specialist

THROUGH: Nicole Woodman, Sustainability Manager

CC: Josh Copley, Barbara Goodrich, Shane Dille, Andy Bertelsen and Leadership Team

SUBJECT: Carton Recycling in Flagstaff

This is in response to a request for information from a resident regarding why the City of Flagstaff does not provide recycling for milk and juice cartons and if the City has any long-term goals to expand recycling capabilities in Flagstaff.

### Recent Success in Expanded Recycling Capabilities

Since 2011, the City of Flagstaff has expanded our single-stream recycling capabilities to accept phone books, aluminum foil, paper egg cartons, greasy pizza boxes, and all types of shredded paper. We have been able to add these items because of changes in the global recycling market.

### Obstacles to Carton Recycling

Many factors affect which materials the City of Flagstaff is able to collect for recycling including the global recycling market, our existing recycling infrastructure, our remote location, and our production of a comparatively small volume of recyclables. Our carton recycling capabilities are restricted by a combination of the market and the aging materials recovery facility (MRF), managed by Norton Environmental.

Norton's cardboard buyer is not interested in buying the cartons because of the plastic lining and the plastic ring at the top. Because Norton is not able to sell the cartons along with the cardboard, they would need to sort the cartons into separate bales and market the bales of cartons to a separate buyer. At the MRF, there are a limited number of revetments (areas into which the recyclable materials can be divided). Currently the revetments are dedicated to sorting the existing accepted materials.

### Long-term Goals for Recycling

Regarding the City's long-term goals for recycling in Flagstaff, staff will bring the Rethink Recycling Plan to City Council for your review on Tuesday, November 8. The purpose of the Plan is to determine how the City can significantly reduce waste production and expand recycling in the coming years.